

NOVA.  
EMPLOYMENT

# WORKING *together*

## PERFECT (JOB) MATCH

### *Success from a grandmother's perspective*

At school, Alex did work experience at an Australian Disability Enterprise. But her grandmother, Rosa, felt that Alex could work in open employment so she brought Alex to meet the team at Penrith NOVA Transition. Two years on, Alex has a job with Folklore Patchwork.



*Alex at her NOVA Transition graduation, 2017*

As a retail assistant, Alex helps with sorting and folding fabrics and cleaning. She also helps customers attending sewing classes to find the right material or thread.

NOVA Transition helped Alex's confidence, especially having NOVA staff with her during her work placements.

"They would encourage her

to try things,' explains Rosa. "They'd say "Yes you can, it's alright; if it's not right straight away, you will get it next time," and so on. They've definitely done a lot to encourage her."

Alex is developing initiative, says Rosa: finding things to do by herself, without anybody telling her. For example, she recently offered to scrub paint off the sink at work.

Alex's sister also noticed her being more independent since Transition. 'She's getting more organised; she wakes up in the morning, she gets dressed, gets ready and goes, like it's a regular routine for her, which is good. And with the transport, she is very confident in where the bus stop is and how to get to and from her work; she's really good at that now.'

It's not just her family who are impressed by Alex's work ethic. Her employers are pleased with her progress as well.



## A WORD FROM MARTIN

### *Focus On Ability – my sideline*

Ten years ago I had a random thought bubble: wouldn't it be cool if we could hold a film competition that showcased the ability of people with disability? We'd call it, 'Focus On Ability'.

It could change the world! I thought.

Back then I didn't realise the cleverness of the word 'focus' in the title of the film competition. Good ideas *feel* right at inception, but taking them from idea through concept into reality requires testing and constant review.

I'm proud to say that Focus On Ability (FOA) became a great concept that has exploded into an international competition offering the expected 200+ film makers over \$175K in prizes. This year's entries finished rolling in on 1 June, which means I've got my work cut out for me watching 200-odd films! I know they'll make me laugh and make me cry. But best of all they'll make me think. Ahh, mission accomplished.

View last year's at [www.focusonability.com](http://www.focusonability.com)

**Martin Wren**  
CEO NOVA Employment



## SORTED!

### *Five steps to workplace inclusion – step 2*

So you've completed step 1: made and documented your plan for workplace inclusion. Now it's time to **incorporate inclusion principles across all of the business.**

A united approach is vital. If the business attempts inclusion in one department but not others, you can expect unrest.

Success comes from management:

- Explaining to staff the need for inclusion. (See [business case](#) or edition 15 of Working Together.)
- Being open to all questions and ideas from the floor
- Expecting to have to remind, coax and insist that the steps towards inclusion are a vital part of their roles and your business.

Most importantly, be mindful of the knock-on effects of the planned change. For example, you hire Fred, who can't drive because of epilepsy. What's the effect on the rest of the staff early Monday when parts need to be picked up from suppliers lest you have no material for assembly day?

It won't be a big deal if you draw on the wisdom of your team. The answers will be there.

Martin Wren, CEO  
NOVA Employment

NOVA.  
EMPLOYMENT

*Your work  
parallels  
your life, but  
in the sense  
of a glass  
full of water  
where people  
look at it and  
say, 'Oh, the  
water's the  
same shape  
as the glass!*

Francis Ford Coppola  
(*Guardian*, 15 October 1998)